

VZCZCXYZ0001
RR RUEHWEB

DE RUEHSG #0482 1402059
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 202059Z MAY 09
FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 4963
INFO RUEHAC/AMEMBASSY ASUNCION 3978
RUEHBO/AMEMBASSY BOGOTA 2423
RUEHBU/AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES 1497
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA 0911
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS 2100
RUEHPE/AMEMBASSY LIMA 6187
RUEHMN/AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO 4408
RUEHQT/AMEMBASSY QUITO 2370
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC
RUCPDOG/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHDC

UNCLAS SANTIAGO 000482

SIPDIS

STATE FOR R/MR, I/PP, WHA/BSC, WHA/PDA, INR/IAA

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KMDR](#) [KPAO](#) [PGOV](#) [ECON](#) [PREL](#) [SNAR](#) [EFIN](#) [CI](#)
SUBJECT: CHILE MEDIA REPORT - MAY 20

Leading Stories

1. Health authorities confirmed 16 cases of AH1N1, which makes Chile the leader in South America for the number of cases. Dailies also report that Prison Guards are on strike, confining themselves in the prisons and refusing to take prisoners to the courts for their hearings. The government is prepared to file suits against any guard who hinders the work of the courts of justice.

AH1N1

2. Health Minister Alvaro Erazo said the government is upgrading the preventive measures in accordance with the outbreak in the country. The first measure will be home isolation and only individuals suffering from severe symptoms will be hospitalized. Erazo called on schools not to close and to follow the health authorities' recommendation on whether it is necessary to close. Erazo underscored that the confirmed cases are experiencing only mild symptoms (El Mercurio, conservative, influential newspaper-of-record, circ. 129,000, 5/20).

U.S.-Related News

3. Foreign Affairs Minister Mariano Fernandez was asked about the possible effects of President Obama's new policy to promote dialogue. "The situation of the United States with Latin America has been subject to tension, which is why President Obama offers an extraordinarily interesting possibility for dialogue in the region... and as he said at the Summit of the Americas... to work with Latin America." Fernandez said that in her upcoming meeting with Obama, President Bachelet will discuss "what she believes are the most important issues in this dialogue."

4. Asked how this new environment reflects the Chile-U.S. relation, Fernandez said President Obama has "great admiration for Chile's policies... particularly regarding social inclusion and protections." He said that the upcoming bilateral presidential meeting in Washington, "reflects the closeness of political relations" between the two countries (La Nacion, government-owned, editorially independent, circ. 4,200, 5/20).

5. Editorial: "Obama and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict"
"Everything seems to indicate that Israel's Prime Minister... is reluctant to make special commitments.... Obama has a free spirit, which his predecessors did not, with regard to the traditional political alliance that exists between the White House and Israel. He is in true harmony with the worldwide feeling in favor of

alleviating the difficult situation of the people of Palestine....
(La Segunda, conservative, afternoon, circ. 33,000, 5/19).

¶6. Wal-Mart has a worldwide policy that bans its employees from buying products on sale in its own supermarkets. It's now applying the same policy to the D&S supermarket chain, which it bought in January in Chile. The decision has triggered labor union accusations that the ban thwarts workers' consumer rights (Estrategia, business and financial, circ. 30,000, 5/20).

Chile and the Region

¶7. Peru filed in The Hague a claim to review maritime borders with Chile, which disavows the 1952 and 1954 border treaties signed by Ecuador, Chile, and Peru. Yesterday, Ecuador's Foreign Affairs Minister Fander Falconi said his country's position is that the two treaties established the borders, thereby endorsing Chile's position in this matter. Falconi said he would be willing to manifest his country's position at The Hague if necessary (La Tercera, conservative, independent, circ. 101,000, 5/20).

New Supreme Court Justice

¶8. The Senate confirmed Judge Rosa Maria Maggie as new Supreme Court Justice. Maggie will fill in the seat left vacant by Supreme Court Chief Justice Marcos Liebedinsky, who retired at 75 (El Mercurio, 5/20).
SIMONS